

Winters Comes To Hawkins by **midnightcat**

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Language: English

Characters: Billy Hargrove, Jonathan Byers, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Nancy Wheeler, Original Character, Steve Harrington

Relationships: Jonathan Byers/Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington/Original Female Character(s)

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Summary:

Taking place after the events of Season 2. There's a new girl at Hawkins High School. Drama ensues.

1. The New Girl In Town

Author's Note:

Warning: There will probably be some language in this fic since the show has quite a bit of it. Just thought I'd let you guys know. <3

If there was one thing that Dawn Winters hated more than anything else in the world, it was being the new girl in school.

She'd learned the ropes by now. Her father transferred for work wherever needed and tried to keep them afloat as best as he could. Those kinds of jobs don't really let teenagers decide where they want to go or where they want to be. She tried to keep her distance from other people as much as possible so that she wouldn't get attached and end up ditching them. After being in New York for six months, with all the lights and life, Dawn couldn't imagine being anywhere else...

But here she was. Standing in front of some scruffy building, holding her new class schedule. What could possibly go wrong at a quaint, quiet little place like Hawkins High School?

She'd soon discover, in the months to come, that she was terribly wrong.

~

It was easy enough to navigate the halls. Dawn wasn't easily shaken like a majority of transfers were. She actually blended in pretty well, besides the dark red hair. She was confident and able to figure things out just fine on her own.

But then came Nancy.

"Hi! I'm Nancy. You must be Dawn?"

Dawn smiled kindly, but kept walking.

"Yep. That's me."

"Good! I'm supposed to give you the tour."

The girl struggled to keep up. Dawn was about the same height as Nancy, but used her legs to her full potential to get where she needed to be.

"No, thanks."

"What?"

Nancy stopped abruptly in the middle of the hall and Dawn followed suit. The slamming of lockers and loud conversations around the two girls made it hard to hear.

"I said thanks, but I'm good. I don't really need a tour."

"Oh... Well, what's your schedule like?"

Dawn hated answering these questions since she'd been asked them a million times. She passed it over wordlessly.

"Oh! We have the same first period! How funny. Would you mind if I walked with you?"

Dawn minded, but she decided not to say anything. While she didn't want to get attached, she didn't go out of her way to make enemies either.

"No."

Nancy asked the normal questions that tour guides are supposed to ask to make new kids welcome. Dawn played along, hoping that this would be the first and last time this happened with her time there.

"Oh, Jonathan!"

Nancy ran over to a shaggy-haired boy across the way. She gave him a quick kiss and ran back to Dawn. Her curiosity got the best of her.

"That's your boyfriend?"

Nancy nodded.

"It's kind of complicated, but I won't talk your ear off."

Dawn appreciated that. She did like Nancy, but told herself that making a friend would be the last thing she'd want when she moved away again.

They reached the classroom before the final warning bell. Dawn sat beside Nancy at a desk by the window and watched the people as they went about their lives. She felt a pang of jealousy that she couldn't be one of them instead of who she was damned to be.

She only looked towards the front when her name was called.

"Dawn? Would you like to come up and introduce yourself in front of the class?"

Crap.

She calmly stood and made her way to the teacher's desk. When she looked up at the class, no one looked interested besides Nancy.

"Go ahead, Dawn." The teacher seemed nice enough, but he had no idea what he just got himself into.

"Hey, everyone. I'll save you guys the torture of listening to me go on and on about myself. I'm Dawn. I'm from nowhere and everywhere, but more specifically and recently New York. That's all I've got. Nice to meet you."

She walked back to her seat and said nothing more the rest of class. She could feel eyes behind her and she ignored it until she couldn't anymore. She glanced behind to see a rugged, jerk type guy shooting daggers at her. She raised her eyebrow and promptly continued to ignore him.

Nancy discreetly passed a note while the teacher wasn't looking. Dawn wasn't one for notes usually, but she made an exception for her acquaintance.

"That's Billy. Whatever you do, do NOT talk to him. He's a jerk."

Dawn had guessed as much, but felt grateful that Nancy would look

out for her the way she had. Most people didn't care enough to say something.

The bell rang and Nancy asked if Dawn needed any help finding her classes. Dawn said she'd be fine and Nancy went on her way, a kind smile and wave goodbye as she left.

Dawn went through the rest of her day with average experiences, that is until she got to her literature class. She'd been placed in a senior-level class since her English skills were above that of the other juniors. It was the class she was looking forward to the most, and when she got there she wasn't disappointed.

The teacher's name was Mr. Millard. He was kind enough to ask if she wanted to introduce herself to the class or not. She declined and he understood. She thanked him profusely for letting her blend in and sat at the back of the classroom where no one would notice she was there.

Class had started, but someone came rushing through the door at the last minute.

"Harrington, I suggest you eat your lunch faster if you want to pass this class."

"Sorry, Mr. Millard. Won't happen again."

Dawn looked up and was immediately filled with dread.

No no no...

She'd liked guys before at first glance, but nothing had ever worked out. She'd never even kissed anybody before. So when she saw the most attractive teenage boy she'd ever seen making his way towards the last available seat- the one next to her- she tried to play it casual by saying absolutely nothing.

At first he was quiet, as if he didn't want to interrupt the class. But eventually he looked over and saw her. It seemed curiosity was his downfall, too.

"Psssst. Hey!"

Dawn looked over, trying her best to look far from amused.

"Can I help you?"

"I was just wondering who you are. I've never seen you before. I'd rather not sit next to a stranger the last semester of high school."

He was trying to make her laugh, and she had to admit it worked a little bit.

"What's your name?"

She asked herself if she really wanted to give him the answer or not... and she decided to play cat and mouse.

"I have an idea... If you can go the whole class without saying anything and manage to find me after school, I'll tell you my name. How's that?"

Dawn highly doubted the boy would care enough to do it, but he nodded and grinned in response.

"Challenge accepted. See you then."

When the bell rang for the last time that day, Dawn bolted from the classroom and made her way to the closest exit. She noticed it had started to rain, but she preferred it to the normal weather anyway so it didn't bother her that much. While she made her way through the parking lot, someone else approached her.

"Hey, ginger! You wanna make my day?"

She turned and saw the kid from her first period class. Billy.

"No, thanks. I'm not into you."

"Ooooooooooh," He said, circling her like a hawk. "I like 'em feisty. Say, what's your name, doll?"

"Like I'd ever tell you."

"Alright, we'll keep Doll for right now."

"Don't call me that."

He came right up to her face, his eyes cold and unforgiving.

"I'll call you whatever I want. Got it?"

Dawn thought about walking away, but her temper got the best of her.

"You know if you wanted to compensate for something, you really should have said so to begin with."

She sauntered away with a pep in her step, letting Billy watch her as she made her way to her Honda CB 750. Not only did the guy have to watch her get on a motorcycle, but he had to watch her not give a single damn that he had just been rejected. She almost forgot her bet with Steve.

That was until he honked from the parking space next to hers.

She jumped and shook her helmet in the air.

"Hey! You scared me!"

Steve laughed and rolled down the window.

"You sure you wanna drive home on that thing? I can take you home if you want."

Dawn shrugged and adjusted her messenger bag so that it wouldn't get in the way of her ride.

"Why not? You think a girl can't drive one of these bad boys?"

"No, no! That's not what I meant!"

"I know. I'm just teasing..."

The two sat in silence, but Dawn remembered that she had made a deal and when she made deals, she didn't break them.

"Dawn. Dawn Winters. At your service, Mr. Harrington."

Steve sputtered, surprised she knew him.

"How did you-"

"Mr. Millard said it when you walked in. You got a first name to go along with it?"

Steve gripped the steering wheel, watching as the girl strapped on her helmet.

"Steve. It's Steve."

"Cool. It's nice to officially meet you, Steve."

"I know this is sudden but..." He looked away as if unsure that he should even ask.

"What?"

"Um... Would you maybe be cool with giving me your phone number?"

Dawn was shocked. No boy had ever asked for her number. How does one give a boy their number? She didn't know.

"Uh... Uh, sure! Should I write down the home number for you?"

"That'd be great!"

He pulled out a napkin from the glove compartment and a pen out of his backpack. He got out from the car and gave it to the girl, who was beginning to regret running out into the rain so quickly. She jotted it down, quickly passing it to him so that the ink wouldn't blur from the water. He was watching her carefully, but she refused to meet his eyes.

"I'll talk to you later, Steve Harrington."

She started the bike and drove off, smiling to herself with what she had accomplished that day. She told herself it was too risky to have her hopes up... But she felt that for the first time, maybe she'd fit in somewhere.

2. An Open Book

Summary for the Chapter:

Dawn has a nightmare and talks with Steve the next day at school.

Notes for the Chapter:

The lyrics at the beginning are from The Point (1971) and you can listen to the song here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bXQM_ngA2fQ

I give full credit for the music to the rightful creators. It's an awesome album if anyone wants to check it out!

"Are you sleeping? Can you hear me?
Do you know if I am by your side?
Does it matter if you hear me?
When the morning comes I'll be there by your side..."

~

Dawn woke up in a cold sweat.

She'd fallen asleep to her favorite album- The Point from 1971- while reading over some homework for her classes. Her father had knocked on the door to check on her. She quickly turned off the music before he could hear it.

"Dawn? You alright?"

Her father meant well, but she knew that the world-renowned Gordon Winters didn't have the time or energy to take her issues on top of his.

"Yeah, I'm fine."

"You were calling for your mother in your sleep."

Dawn was at a loss for words. She hadn't done that in years.

"Sorry, dad."

"It's okay. Are you having nightmares again?"

"No." She lied. He could tell, but he didn't want to pressure her.

"Just let me know if you need anything, kiddo."

He closed the door behind him and Dawn tried to calm her raging headache by massaging her temples. She was hoping that she wouldn't fall asleep in class.

"That would be a real nightmare..." She thought. She decided to continue her work in the morning and go back to sleep, hopefully with better dreams.

But the dreams never came. Just a silent, black still of nothing.

~

The next day at school, Dawn was trying to think of anything but the night before. When she saw Steve after lunch, she passed by without saying anything, but he quickly caught sight of her and chased after her.

"Dawn! Hey, hold up!"

She stopped, trying to hide the blush that was creeping onto her face. She could always blame it on the cold.

"Hey, Steve."

"Hey, I called but you never answered. Figured you were probably busy."

"Oh. I was probably in the middle of a nap, actually. My dad usually doesn't have time to answer the phone."

"What does your dad do?"

Dawn smiled kindly, but she really didn't want to go into it.

"It's kind of complicated."

"Okay. Well, if you ever feel like talking about it..."

Dawn felt for the first time like she should share the personal information she had kept bottled up for so long. So she did.

"He's a geneticist. He's got a new job at some company in the area."

"Got it... Does he like it here?"

The two started to walk towards their literature class.

"I think so. He doesn't really talk about it much. We don't talk much anymore about anything, really. Not since..."

Steve waited for her to continue but she didn't.

"Well, what about your mom? What does she do?"

Dawn tried not to look hurt. She dug her fingernails into her palm, trying to push the nightmares out of her head.

"She died two years ago."

Steve looked like he'd wish he'd never asked.

"Oh God, I'm so sorry-"

"It's okay-"

"No, I shouldn't have-"

"Really, Steve. It's fine."

Just then, Steve met eyes with Nancy, who was standing at what Dawn guessed was her locker. Dawn waved, but Nancy didn't wave back. Dawn was confused, and a little hurt by the transaction. She thought that maybe Nancy had lost interest like people usually did. But when she looked at Steve, she thought otherwise.

They reached the classroom, but the conversation didn't end when they got there. She started to tell Steve things that she'd never told

anyone, like where else she had lived and the fact that she had no siblings. It was really nice to have someone to talk to. She started to think maybe she should have done it before.

"I do have one question for you, Harrington."

"Go ahead. I'm an open book."

"Are you sure about that?"

Steve knew what she was going to ask before she could get the words out. It was obvious.

"Nance and I used to be together. We broke up last semester. Well, sort of. She picked someone else."

It was Dawn's turn to feel guilty, but she remember she hadn't really asked.

"I'm sorry."

Steve looked lost. It was the most upset she'd seen him yet and she didn't enjoy the sight.

"I just wish that we could still be friends. I still don't know what I did to deserve it. I don't know if I should point fingers or apologize."

"Apologize for what?"

"That's the thing," He said sadly. "I have no idea."

After class, the two decided to meet up at a new place in town called Rocky's Rockin' Diner. It sounded corny to Dawn, but she tried to hide it from Steve.

"I'll pick you up so you don't have to waste the gas."

Dawn felt panicked suddenly. That's usually what boys did when they wanted to take you on a date, wasn't it?"

"Uh... Sure! Should I write down the address?"

They exchanged information and parted ways, both excited to have a

new friend. Dawn and Steve were secretly hoping though, that maybe it would become more than that eventually.

3. Dinner at Rocky's

Summary for the Chapter:

Steve and Dawn meet at Rocky's to talk.

Notes for the Chapter:

The lyrics at the beginning are from David Bowie's classic "Space Oddity" and you can listen to the song here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYYRH4apXDo>

I give full credit for the music to the rightful creators. RIP Bowie. <3

"And the stars look very different today
For here
Am I sitting in a tin can
Far above the world
Planet Earth is blue
And there's nothing I can do..."

~

The song played in the background of the busy diner much to Dawn's silent approval. Rocky's was much better than she anticipated. She ordered a classic chocolate milkshake and a cheeseburger with fries. Steve ordered the chicken fingers and a coca cola. She was nervous to be out in public with Steve. Although she didn't show it at school, she didn't know how socializing really worked. Steve apparently explored Hawkins a lot and had experiencing dining out. If she wanted to keep spending time with him, and she definitely did, she'd have to get used to stuff like this.

"So... how shall we start?"

"How about I ask a question, you answer, and then vice versa?"

Dawn nodded and Steve began.

"Okay, favorite color?"

"Really? Of all the things you could have asked and that's it?"

"We have to start simple!"

Dawn shook her head, laughing.

"Fine. Pink."

"Really? Didn't peg you as the peppy type."

"Can't judge on appearances can you?"

Steve shrugged and said, "Mine's red. Not bright red. Crimson. Classy."

"Ah."

"Your turn to come up with something, Frenchy."

"Hey!"

"What?"

Dawn's nose wrinkled as the waitress brought their drinks.

"I hate Grease, for your information..."

"Ugh, me too."

"Anyway... Hmmm... Let me think."

"You didn't come with a list of questions you're dying to ask?"

Dawn had, in fact, had many things she wanted to ask the boy. But it was too soon to jump to those quite yet.

"Favorite artist?"

"What kind?"

"Music artist."

"The Rolling Stones."

"Huh. I was expecting something like The Beatles."

Steve rolled his eyes and said, "Must be the hair."

The two went back and forth with their banter until the food arrived. They'd gotten some of the basics out of the way, but Dawn was dying to ask more personal questions. When they'd sat chewing for a few minutes, she spoke up.

"What does your dad do?"

Steve's brow furrowed and he took a large bite, trying to find the right words.

"Businessman. Boring."

"Why is it boring?"

He sighed, wiping his mouth with a napkin.

"Let's just say I don't really get along well with my dad."

Dawn didn't want to pry, so she asked about his mother, secretly hoping he didn't have a similar answer to her own situation.

"She's just a stay at home mom. She enjoys it, and she gives me a lot of freedom. Love her. She's a reader."

Dawn smiled to herself. She was happy he could enjoy his mother's presence when she couldn't. She missed it.

"That's nice."

"I know that's kind of a touchy subject for you."

"Not really."

"Can I ask a question then?"

Dawn nodded again.

"What happened to her?"

"Well..."

"You don't have to tell me if you don't want to."

"No, it's okay. She was sick. Cancer. She ran away before they could hospitalize her indefinitely. Guess she didn't want to be cooped up. They said they found her the next day. But she didn't make it. I don't really know all of the details. My dad did the best he could to keep me out of it."

Steve apologized again but Dawn said, "Really. It's fine. My mother was a secretive person. I didn't know her well, but I loved her nonetheless."

"It sounds distant. Your family."

"It's a game of give and take. My dad works to keep us running. I go to school and take care of my own responsibilities. As long as I don't get in trouble, and I never do, he doesn't care what I do."

"It's kind of the same way with my parents. My father blames me for not being a football player but he's slowly letting go of that since I've been talking to him about taking over the family business. Mom is good at calming the storm when he gets mad."

They finished their food and the waitress took the plates away.

"Can I ask another somewhat personal question?" Dawn really wanted to know the answer to this one.

"Go ahead." Steve crossed his arms with a grin on his face. He seemed ready for anything.

"What about Nancy?"

Except for that.

"Sorry, I shouldn't have asked-"

"I loved Nancy."

Dawn felt a pang in her chest and was suddenly confused. She couldn't be falling that hard for this guy already, right?

"I loved her," He repeated, "But I've been thinking about it and I think she's happier with Jonathan."

Dawn stayed quiet, unsure of what to say.

"I think she was caught up too much in how we appeared to others. And she feels guilt for Barb's death."

"Barb? Who's that?"

Steve's eyes widened.

"Oh! Right! You weren't here for that. Well, one of her best friends... Passed away recently."

"That's horrible. She seemed so happy when I met her."

"Yeah, that's because she has Jonathan. He's good at solving mysteries with her. Me... Not so much."

"I'm sorry. I had no idea."

"It's okay. But she feels guilty because she disappeared the night we seriously got together. And I don't blame her. I understand. I'm always here for her. I just wish she had told me how she felt. I didn't know I was part of the problem."

Dawn glanced down at her hands, realizing she was fidgeting with her coat. She didn't know what "seriously got together" meant, but she could put the pieces together.

"I know what that feels like. People never really tell me how they feel."

"What do you mean?"

"It's like this..."

Dawn took a pen out from her messenger bag and started to draw on

one of the used napkins. There was a big circle and a smaller circle on the outside.

"That big circle is everyone else. And I'm that small one."

Steve stared at the diagram, a little confused.

"You see, it's like I'm stuck in space and everyone else is on planet earth. They talk among themselves. They're polite if they notice me. But nothing more than that. It's always been that way. I've never been stationary enough for people to get to know me. Therefore, they never tell me what they really think of me. How could they?"

Steve pocketed the diagram in the chest pocket of his coat, zipped it up, and looked the girl straight in the eyes.

"Well, I'll tell you what I think."

Dawn placed her elbow on the table, her chin in her hand, and leaned forward.

"Go ahead."

Steve crossed his arms and studied the girl.

"You're smart. Seeing as you're a year ahead of your class in English, you obviously have a few more brain cells than a typical student. You're funny. Sarcastic. And you're tough. You've been through a lot, but something tells me you don't let it get in your way. You keep moving. I like that."

Dawn smiled in approval.

"Tell me more, tell me more..." She joked.

"But you're also very secluded. I think you have a hard time trusting people. So that leaves one question in my mind."

"And what is that?"

Steve copied the girl and leaned forward.

"Do you trust me?"

Dawn wasn't sure how to answer. Everything internally screamed that she did but something deep inside her told her it was a mistake.

"I think so."

"You think so?"

"Yes. For now, anyway."

Steve sat back against the booth and smiled.

"Well, that's a start."

They left soon after that. Steve picked up the check, much to Dawn's dismay... but she was also secretly happy. It felt more like a date without officially being one.

When they got outside, Dawn started to shiver. She tried to warm herself up, but was unsuccessful. Steve saw this and placed his coat on her shoulders, walking towards his car without looking back. The smile on her face was missed by him, but completely recognizable to anyone who'd seen it.

Dawn sat in the passenger seat. Steve was about to start the car when Dawn spotted a colorful building down the way.

"Is that an arcade?!"

Notes for the Chapter:

I think I'm going to start including music in all of the chapters now and make a playlist at the end. Super excited for that! Let me know what you guys think! :)